

An Instructional Manual

The following pages will explain how the K-12 Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum Frameworks can be used.

You will find the Arts Disciplines organized into five sections

1. **Dance**
2. **Theatre**
3. **Music**
4. **Visual Arts**
5. **The Arts: An In-depth View**

Each of the first four sections includes:

- an **Introduction** that explains the history of the art form and its role in education today,
- **definitions** of approaches to the arts and processes of learning
- a **Concept Chart** that suggests how questions can begin discussions about content in the arts and

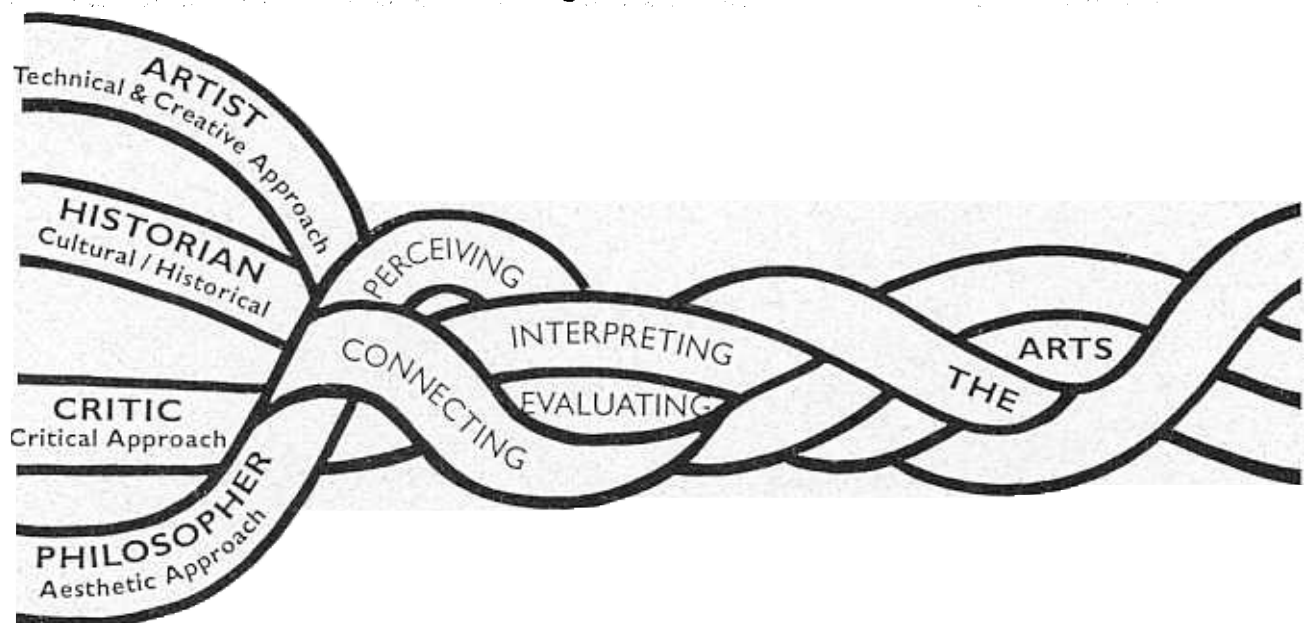
a **One-Page Explanation of Each Content Cell** from the chart.

The fifth section, **“The Arts: An In-depth View,”** is devoted to elaboration and examples of selected content cells from the sections on dance, theatre, music and visual arts. Possible applications for performance objectives are suggested and sample activities are identified. Narratives provide additional information about content.

USING FRAMEWORKS

Definitions, Organization and Overview

Frameworks is designed to describe the content of dance, theatre, music and visual arts through approaches and processes. The approaches describe to learners the role of the artist, historian, critic and/or philosopher. The processes reveal how learners perceive, interpret, evaluate and connect through the arts.



Approaches

Technical, creative, cultural/historical, critical and aesthetic.

These approaches can be seen as overlapping lenses. For example, artists, historians, critics and philosophers all have their unique perspectives. They also ask many of the same questions. Each of these approaches represents a real-world discipline that can help involve students with the arts, teach critical thinking, and offer students opportunities to see connections among the arts and the world around them.

Processes

Perceiving, interpreting, evaluating and connecting.

The arts builds skills necessary to understand the processes used by artists, historians, critics and philosophers. Teachers can use these same processes to facilitate learning, motivate students and build an understanding of each arts discipline. Active learning encourages students to participate in discussion and take responsibility for their own learning. Multiple ways to make art and to perform can be used.

Frameworks Charts

Here is an example of a music discipline chart from the Frameworks (refer to page C3).*

- Each chart has been organized with approaches down the side and processes across the top.
- Questions illustrate the content of these intersections.
- The selections that the teacher makes will determine the focus of any given unit or lesson.

Approaches

Processes

MUSIC	PERCEIVING	INTERPRETING	EVALUATING	CONNECTING
TECHNICAL APPROACH	What skills/ language are needed to participate in performing and listening to music?	How do the skills and language of music communicate?	What degree of proficiency was achieved?	How do advancing musical skills encourage lifelong learning?
CREATIVE APPROACH	How are the basic elements of music used creatively?	What is this music communicating?	Is a musical message conveyed effectively?	What does this message communicate to the individual?
CULTURAL/ HISTORICAL APPROACH	From what perspective is style expressed?	What does the music mean in the context of its time and place?	Does the music have significance today, yesterday and/or for the future? Why?	What connections can be made to other times, places and cultures?
CRITICAL APPROACH	Are the basic elements of music used effectively?	How well does this music evoke a response?	What is the value of this music?	Are meaningful connections made to personal experience?
AESTHETIC APPROACH	How are the senses involved in responding to music?	Why does this music evoke a reaction/ response?	How does music relate to the individual?	How does music relate to life?

For example, in the Critical Approach to Connecting, the question is "Are meaningful connections made to personal experience?" Although these questions are arranged in separate cells, the approaches overlap and a number of these questions might be used in the same lesson.

Substantive questions about the arts can be addressed by children at all ages. Classroom teachers are best able to interpret the questions at the appropriate level while maintaining the integrity of the questions. Thus, separate questions for each level have not been written; rather, broad and significant questions that might be addressed at all levels have been suggested.

Performance objectives and sample activities are also broad in scope and could be modified for a variety of levels. In section five examples are given of performance objectives which are divided into three levels: Primary, Upper Elementary/Middle and High School.

* The illustrations on this and the following pages are representative examples from the Frameworks document. Use them as a guide or sample. Refer to the pages mentioned here in the body of the text.

USING FRAMEWORKS

Approaches/Processes A Content Cell

THEATRE	
<i>Critical Approach to Connecting</i>	
<i>How do my criteria compare to those of others?</i>	
Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do standards learned in theatre relate to those learned in life situations?• What cultural standards are used to evaluate a theatrical experience?• How do my standards compare to standards of the past or the present?
Performance Objectives:	<p>Learners will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify standards in theatre that relate to those in other fields of study.• Identify how their criteria in evaluating a theatrical experience are drawn from other kinds of experiences in their lives: e.g., television, sports.• Articulate how their criteria are drawn from the past.
Sample Activities:	<p>Improvise a scene about a situation the group has seen or experienced in your school. Discuss how this situation is viewed by each participant.</p> <p>Analyze how one's experiences influenced his/her reaction to a current popular movie.</p> <p>Choose a play. Discuss the themes. If this were turned into a visual artwork, a dance, or a piece of music, what criteria would you use to judge the latter? Are the criteria the same as for judging a play?</p> <p>Keep a journal on actors you have seen in plays, television and movies. How effective were the actors in creating believable people? What criteria were used to make the evaluation?</p>

Here is an example of a Content Cell. (See Page B19)

- **Title:** The title at the top of the page identifies the discipline.
- **Cell Name:** The cell name identifies the approach and process labels from the discipline chart.
- **Questions:** The italicized question is the key question from the discipline chart. The other questions serve to support and extend the thinking and provide opportunities for creative problem solving, critical thinking and active inquiry through the arts.
- **Performance Objectives:** Performance objectives define what a student should know and be able to do.

- **Sample Activities:** Sample activities are written as examples of how various aspects of the key questions might translate into a learning activity. They are not intended to be full lesson plans, merely samples for you to expand to fit your curriculum. They provide a springboard for you to define your own classroom activities and to adapt them to fit a learner's special needs.

USING FRAMEWORKS

An example from Section 5, **"The Arts: An In-depth View"** (See Pages E34-E35)

- In Section 5 you will find 20 in-depth content cells selected from Dance, Theatre, Music and the Visual Arts sections.
- This more in-depth development of a cell adds descriptive narratives of the content, suggests levels for performance objectives and sample activities.

These activities focus on a content cell but are extended by the addition of questions from related cells from the discipline chart. It is important to remember that the approaches and processes are seldom found in isolation but often overlap in objectives and activities. The sample activities are not prescriptive to curriculum but a starting place for teachers. In fact, it is hoped that the "work in progress" nature of this publication will serve to show a commitment to the idea of Frameworks as suggestions, gestures, or road signs that announce . . . "Look! That is a good question! Here is an important idea that needs to be examined and 'mined.'"

VISUAL ARTS

Critical Approach
 to *Connecting*

What connections can I make to my own experience?

Questions:

- What factors do I use to evaluate works of art?
- How have experiences that I have had helped me to formulate criteria for evaluating art?
- How do my evaluative criteria differ from those of others?
- How do I apply my evaluative criteria to my own work?

Responses to artwork vary according to the connections that can be drawn between the work and the experiences of the viewer. In describing artwork, viewers are often telling their own stories, just as the artist creating the work has told an individual story. As people draw connections between the work and their world, their critical response is formed. The value viewers place upon a work will be determined by the extent to which connections can be made.

Performance Objectives:

Learners will:

Primary Level	Upper Elementary/ Middle Level	High School Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate awareness of the arts' connections to elements of their lives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the qualities of works of art that connect to their own life experiences. • Compare and contrast the life experiences that appear in images with their own life experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze how their own experiences influence their critical judgments about their works and the works of others.

A Closer Look:

To help learners form their critical responses to artworks, we must ask them to do the same thing, to seek out something in their experience that helps them to explain the artist's choices. It may be that their response to a work is based upon the literal content of the work, or the story that the image represents; or it may be that the colors or textures or other elements of the work evoke sensations that tie to their lives. Once a viewer can make a connection, the work takes on personal worth.

Sample Activities:

Primary Level

Choose a work of art that the learners can relate to strongly. Have them write or tell a story or a poem that relates the work to some experience in their own lives. Make a work of art about their experiences.

RELATED QUESTIONS:

How is each learner reacting to this and why?
 What are the ways one can approach art?
 Is this good?
 How does art relate to life?

Upper Elementary/Middle Level

Have learners pick three works from their portfolios and develop a list of criteria that each would use to evaluate these works. Compare all criteria developed by the class.

RELATED QUESTIONS:

Why is this work important?
 What are the ways one can approach art?
 Is this good?
 How does art relate to life?

High School Level

Find three or four works of art that deal with a similar theme or subject but that come from different times and places. Have each learner pick the work that he/she identifies with the most and explain why. Have each learner write a letter to the artist asking questions about his or her work. Research the artist and the time period and have learners answer their own letters from the artist's viewpoint. Make their own works of art on a similar topic but from individual points of view.

RELATED QUESTIONS:

How are the learners reacting to this and why?
 What does it mean in its time and culture?
 What connections can be made to other times, places and cultures?
 What connections can be made to my art and why?

USING FRAMEWORKS

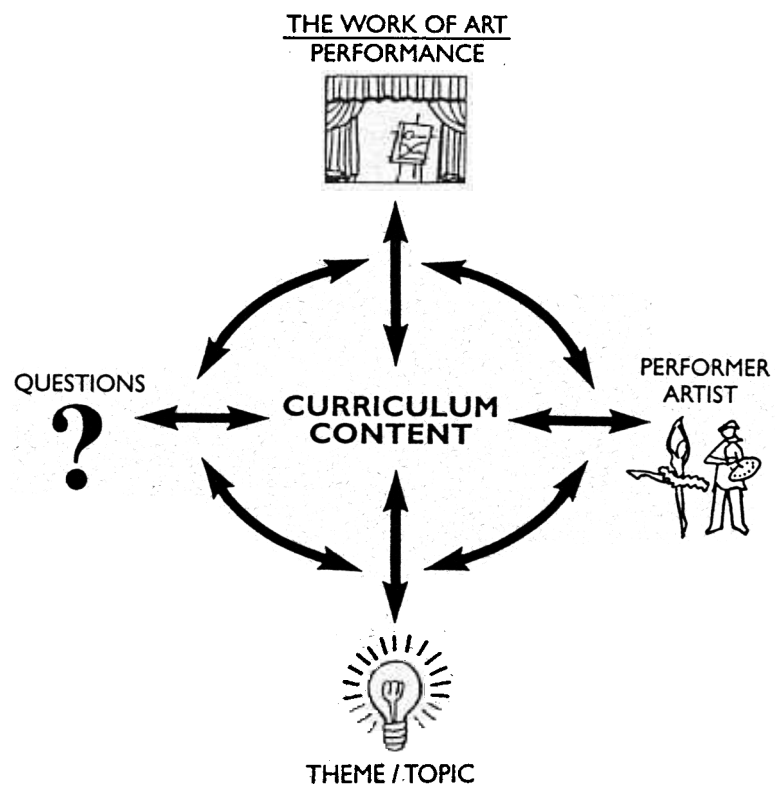
A Way to Begin

There are many ways to approach the development of curriculum in the arts. Educators consider learners' needs, developmental characteristics and school guidelines. Then inspiration to write curriculum may begin with the work of art or performance, thematic or topical units, production or performance activities, or questions for students to consider.

Educators are aware of these choices and select a variety of curriculum models, units of study or individual lessons. They also consider how choices build on the existing curriculum, reflect equity and diversity and assure flexibility to meet future schooling needs.

Selection of what is taught should always reflect significant issues and works of art that help students gain insights into their own ideas and lives.

This model shows one way that educators may use to select a place to begin curriculum writing.



Since Nebraska does not mandate statewide curriculum, the Frameworks document only suggests possible works of art, themes, or production or performance activities for the classroom. Local districts will make choices and adapt and expand these suggestions.

Once a starting point has been selected the educators will address all these areas.

Interdisciplinary Considerations

Educators often make interdisciplinary connections; they are especially concerned with connections among the arts.

Here is an example using the topic of "social commentary" to show how you might enter the curriculum-writing process and connect your curriculum to other disciplines.

THE WORK OF ART PERFORMANCE



VISUAL ARTS

Begin with a work of art, say Picasso's "Guernica." From this central image, you may decide to deal with themes such as the ravages of war or inhumanity. Now you can brainstorm other works you might bring in from the visual arts as well as music, dance and theatre. Ideas for having learners produce their own protest art begins to surface along with questions for discussing their own and other works of art.



THEME / TOPIC

THEATRE

Begin with the topic of social commentary, zeroing in on the theme of war protest. Then move on to examining or performing specific plays like "The Diary of Anne Frank," "I Never Saw Another Butterfly," or "Viet Rock." One activity might ask students to examine how other art forms have dealt with war protest. Questions might prompt deeper examination of the relative effectiveness of theatre compared to other forms of war protest.

PERFORMER ARTIST



MUSIC

Practice an arrangement of the folk song "We Shall Overcome." This leads to a consideration of music's role in social commentary, particularly protest. Discussion questions have students examine how music is used to convey thoughts and feelings and to unite people in a common cause. Then you may begin to identify other protest forms in music and the other arts and compare how different arts have used the protest theme. Perhaps visual images, dance, or a piece from a theatrical work would be incorporated into a public performance of "We Shall Overcome."

QUESTIONS



DANCE

"How do we create and communicate through dance?" Then a specific dance might be considered, say Kurt Jooss' "The Green Table." From this central image you may decide you want to deal with social commentary themes such as the ravages of war or inhumanity. Connections to other works of dance as well as other art forms might occur next. Then students could practice using movement to communicate, perhaps including music, theatre and visual arts in a dance production.

USING FRAMEWORKS

THEMES: An Alternative Approach

Teachers use themes to organize curriculum. Themes help to connect learning to students' lives and allow them to examine how they make connections to their world.

Ideas and meaning found in an artwork or performance can often be the inspiration for excellent themes. Teachers working together to build thematic units can make learning exciting and relevant for their students.

Ideas about themes:

- A theme deals with general issues, but it also "cuts two ways"—for example, it is possible to talk about the ideas underlying the theme from positive and negative consequences.
- A theme relates to aspects of the human condition such as life cycle, symbol, aesthetic response, time and place, the natural world, work, etc.
- A theme is most successful when it has a key idea that helps give a subject shape and focus, is based on a controlling idea and generalizes information rather than being based on a fact.
- The ideas and meaning found in the center of an artwork or a performance can often be the inspiration for excellent themes that can connect the learning for students.

Try building a theme by beginning with an artwork or performance and then find connections to other disciplines. The examples given on the previous page grow out of Picasso's "Guernica." Social Commentary could be considered a possible topic in the example. Out of that topic one of many possible themes might be, **"Crisis, Responsibility and Comment: Deciding to Speak Out."**